

**ABSTRACT****Maintaining Software and Data**

Computer software and/or data is updated by a method comprising the steps of: a recipient computer (1) sending a software and/or data update request as an e-mail message (M1) to an owner computer (2); the owner computer (2) analysing the update request and preparing a corresponding update response, which it sends as an e-mail message (M2) to the recipient computer (1); and the recipient computer (1) responding to the update response by updating the corresponding software and/or data. Using Internet electronic mail the security of the recipient computer (1) can be maintained using a firewall (F). The update requests (M1) and responses (M2) are compiled by reference to a common data directory (D1,D2) so that only files identified by the recipient computer (1) in the update request (M1) need to be updated in the update response (M2). These files are preferably sent as attachments in the e-mailed update response (M2).